

AboutTown Magazine
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Official Magazine of the City of Edina



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W I N T E R • 2 0 0 1

Thorpe's Efforts To Sell Country Club District Lots Went Into High Gear In Late 1920's



Photo by Mark Thompson

Following is the second of a two-part series on the development of Edina's Country Club District. Part I appeared in the Autumn 2000 issue of About Town.

By Joe Sullivan, Freelance writer and Edina resident

In the last issue of *About Town*, we looked at the early days of Sam Thorpe's development of the Country Club District – from 1922 through 1925. Sales of lots were slow at the beginning, so in the latter half of the decade, the sales effort shifted into high gear.

In their book "History and Architecture of Edina, Minnesota," William W. Scott and Jeffrey A. Hess reported, "In 1926, to stimulate interest in his Country Club development, Thorpe commissioned the Minneapolis architectural firm of Liebenberg & Kaplan to design seven model homes in a variety of historic revival styles. These model homes, all built on Edina Boulevard and Moorland Avenue, were completed in 1927. To a considerable degree, the Liebenberg & Kaplan designs set an architectural standard for later construction in the district ... The architecture of the Country Club District mirrors the taste of the prosperous executive and professional classes of the 1920s-1940s," the authors concluded.

Scott and Hess also noted that "elaborate historic revival architecture held sway in [the] ... affluent Country Club District. Country Club is a veritable museum of historic

revival houses ... [with a] stylistic mix of English Tudor, English Cottage, Norman, French Provincial, American Colonial, Renaissance and Mediterranean revivals.

"Although several of the buildings are the work of architects," they determined, " ... the majority of the dwellings were evidently designed by contractors. Carl Hansen, Louis Hanson and Aaron Duoos were especially prominent builders in the area."

"He was selling more than land; he was selling a planned community," Paul D. Hesterman said of Thorpe in his book, "The History of Edina, Minnesota." It was "a complete, guaranteed restricted residential section. It boasted ... a 10-year fund for maintenance of all the small parks at street intersections." Thorpe predicted that "This ... Country Club District will become as well-known as ... [the] Country Club District of Kansas City or the famous Shaker Heights development in Cleveland or Roland Park in Baltimore." (In 1935, Thorpe's prediction came true. Edina's Country Club was named one of the top four suburban communities in the nation along with the aforementioned.)

Thorpe Encouraged Building of New Schools
Aware that the type of people attracted to his development would demand quality schools, Thorpe encouraged a compromise that ended in an intramural battle between the villages of Edina and Morningside over where a new elementary school should be built. Even though Morningside had seceded from Edina in 1920, it remained, along with Edina, a part of School District 17. According to

Hesterman, the two communities had outgrown the brick schoolhouse located on the present site of Edina City Hall. In 1925, a compromise was reached. It resulted in new schools being built in *both* communities. Thorpe sold the Wooddale School site at West 50th Street and Wooddale Avenue to the Edina school board for \$1 and paid \$9,000 for the Morningside School site at West 45th Street and Grimes Avenue, which had been purchased earlier by the school board. The Wooddale and Morningside schools were opened with a parade in November 1926.

Country Club Set Standard For Edina's Future
In his history of Edina, Hesterman stated that "The Country Club set an architectural standard for future suburban developments in the village." The Edina Village Council minutes of Oct. 28, 1928 stated: "Development of Country Club led to the modernization of the 50th and France commercial district, which until the late 1920s had been an unpaved crossroads."

According to Hesterman, development of the Country Club District also encouraged the Village Council to adopt principles of city planning. On May 14, 1929, Edina became the first municipality in the state other than Minneapolis, St. Paul or Duluth to pass a comprehensive zoning ordinance.

"Passage of the ordinance was important because, for the first time, it established the values behind the Country Club District as the standard for future development in Edina," Hesterman wrote. "Thorpe's development plans and deed restrictions had been a private attempt to develop a

community [that] featured substantial 'high class' single-family residences on large lots separated from not only commercial activity but also from apartments, duplexes and



Edina Historical Society



Edina Historical Society

These are two of the seven model homes on Moorland Avenue that Thorpe Realty commissioned in 1926 and completed in 1927 to promote lagging sales in the Country Club District.

low-value housing. The zoning ordinance used the power of the village government to accomplish that standard for virtually the entire village.”

Fire At The Country Club

On Halloween 1929, some 100 Edina Country Club members held a Halloween costume ball, which kept the clubhouse hopping until 2 a.m. The club caterer, Robert Riordan, his brother and their wives inspected the clubhouse after the guests had left, then went to bed. At 3:30 a.m., the telephone rang, triggered by a fire that had apparently shorted the phone wires. Alarmed by the ringing phone, the two couples escaped out of the building through the smoke. The fire spread, and despite six hours of work by the Minneapolis Fire Department, the building was destroyed except for the men’s locker room and the golf pro shop. However, the clubhouse was quickly replaced with a larger, similarly handsome structure.

All the Advantages, None of the Disadvantages

The first issue of the *Country Club Association Newsletter* echoed its members’ values: “We have all the advantages of a large and modern city, without any of the disadvantages commonly found. No railroad yards, factories, stores or apartment houses belching clouds of sooty smoke and no nerve-wracking traffic. Just a delightful, quiet, beautiful place to live, to get the utmost out of life. Ideal for children, of which there are many, a community of homeowners who are interested always in the appearance of their homes.”

At first, that idyllic situation was protected by the deed restrictions and the private service corporation owned by

Thorpe Bros. that provided utilities and other public services. Inevitably, however, this cohesive group of Country Club residents, all sharing similar values, sought government action to protect their investment and their ideals.

Secession Was Proposed But Didn’t Happen

The idea of secession first came up in January 1929, when a bill was introduced to the state legislature at the request of Thorpe Bros., which would have allowed the Country Club District to vote for secession from the Village of Edina. Like earlier secessionists in neighboring Morningside, a spokesman said that residents of Country Club felt they had little in common with other villagers since they “owned no chickens or horses and did not go in for the livestock industry in any form or manner.”



Thorpe’s Country Club development included an 18-hole golf course and clubhouse. The original clubhouse burned in 1929 shortly after it was completed, but was quickly rebuilt and enlarged. This is what the clubhouse looked like in 1932 after rebuilding had been completed.

But, despite strong pressure from Thorpe and others, the issue was never settled in any conclusive way. The idea stayed alive for most of the next decade and several times a vote seemed near, but secession of the Country Club District never gained enough momentum to carry the day.

Profile Of An Upper-Middle-Class Community

Thorpe’s continual promotional efforts eventually succeeded. By 1930, the former fields of the Brown and

Baird farms had been mostly built over. The Country Club District contained 269 houses and more than 1,000 residents – nearly one-third of Edina’s total population. Scott and Hess’ demographic analysis of the 1930 “Country Club Directory” revealed the basic profile of an upper-middle-class community: 591 adults, 344 minors and 97 servants. Hesterman profiled the “typical” Country Club family as having “ ... one or two children and possibly a servant. The breadwinner was a white collar worker, whether in a business or the professions.”



In the early 1920s, residents of both Edina and Morningside recognized the need for a new school. It was inevitable that building a new school would arouse opposition. Eventually, the controversy escalated into a deadlock over where to build a new school – on the old site in Edina or in Morningside. In 1925, the school board compromised with a proposal to build two schools, one in each village. Following 11 referendums held between 1920 and 1924, the measure finally passed by a margin of only three votes and both schools were dedicated in 1926. The Wooddale School (left), at 50th Street and Wooddale Avenue, was built in the Spanish Colonial Revival style and enlarged by a rear addition in 1936 with funding from the Works Progress Administration. The Morningside School (right), at 42nd Street and Grimes Avenue, remained part of School District 17 even though Morningside had seceded from Edina in 1920.



The Depression And War Delay Building Boom

The Depression and World War II delayed the building boom, but otherwise influenced Edina relatively little. Individuals and families were certainly hard hit, but government of the village itself survived with only a bit of belt-tightening. Hesterman reported, “The (Country Club) building boom paused for a few years after 1930, resumed in 1936 where it had left off, paused again from 1940 to 1945, but then began to make up for lost time ... The 1936-1940 boom overshadowed the earlier slump, and the postwar boom offset wartime stagnation.”

“Old Edina” continued to fade into the background. The Edina Mill had been razed in 1933 despite efforts by the Country Club Association and others to save it. The last passenger trip of the Dan Patch railroad took place in 1942, although it continues to operate today as a freight line. “Old Edina” was still there – the last operating farm in Edina did not cease operation until 1959 – but it was rapidly disappearing.

In a 1999 Star Tribune article, staff writer Jim Buchta reported, “In 1982, the entire Country Club neighborhood was listed on the National Register of Historic Places, which guarantees the integrity of this fine neighborhood where handsome stone, brick and stucco houses are uniformly set 20 feet from the sidewalks along gently winding streets shaded by a canopy of tall and evenly spaced elms. Nothing, even houses that are being remodeled (and there are plenty of them) seems out of place.”

Because they were built in the 1920s and 1930s, many of the Country Club District houses didn’t have some of

the features that are common in today’s new homes. “What you find are more formal spaces: sunken living rooms, formal dining rooms and first-floor libraries ... still highly desirable for people wanting an Old World, traditional house,” said Edina Realty sales agent Jane Paulus in Buchta’s article. “Country Club’s homes generally sell for \$300,000 to more than \$1 million, but price is no deterrent. The inventory of houses for sale is low,” she added. “Many of the houses are sold before they are advertised or put on the market.”

From personal experience, I know that some of those houses were and are great for hosting parties. When I attended Southwest High School in the mid- to late-1940s, Edina had not yet built its first high school. As a result, many of my high school friends lived in the Country Club District. I have wonderful memories of some terrific parties in those big, older houses – many of which had nicely furnished “recreation rooms” in their basements.

An Oct. 2, 1954 article in the *Edina Morningside Courier* reported that the suburbanization of postwar Edina continued at an unprecedented pace. “From 1946 to 1950, a total of 1,897 building permits were issued. And by the mid-1950s, the city’s population was increasing at an annual rate of 2,500 people.”

A Philosophy For A Vital, Stable Edina

Another Star-Tribune article written in October 1994 by Jim Buchta quoted former Edina City Manager Ken Rosland and his philosophy about what makes Edina a

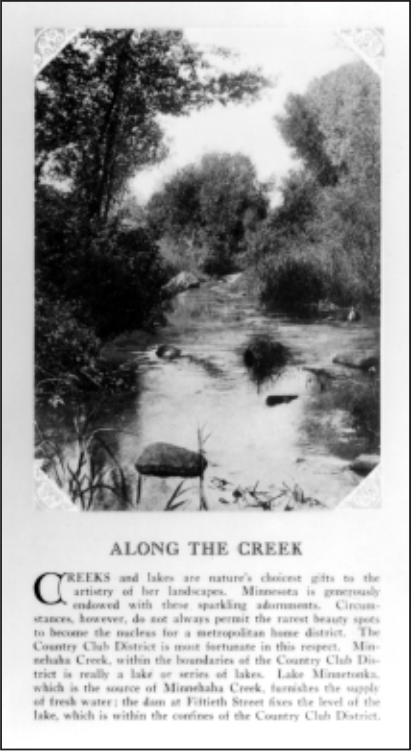
vital, stable place to live. “If the City takes good care of itself by providing reliable services and maintaining the infrastructure (public facilities, roads, buildings, parks, etc.) then people will take care of the City,” he said. “People are reinvesting by remodeling and even replacing existing homes with more expensive ones – signs of big demand and an indication that people who want to live in Edina are undeterred by its almost complete development.”

“The best [way to see] this trend is [to look at] building permits. More permits were issued [from Edina City Hall] in the mid-1990s than in the mid-1970s, when there was more new construction and underdeveloped land. [For example,] in 1974, the City issued 587 building permits ... and in 1993, 1,374. Those figures are for new buildings and structural changes to buildings. All of this in a city that is basically completed. People are reinvesting and that is the proof in the pudding. People are spending unbelievable amounts of money to upgrade.”

In her book, “Edina – Chapters in the City’s History,” Deborah Morse-Kahn assessed the affect on present-day Edina of Thorpe’s 1922 vision: “Samuel Thorpe’s Country Club District [proved] to be the critical factor, the one significant event, the reason that Edina is known today as a suburb of exclusivity and wealth. Thorpe’s Country Club District spelled the beginning of the end for Edina as a community of quiet market gardeners happy with their streetcars, their Grange Hall, their corner telephone box, their unpaved roads.

“Here was the future, here were the new suburbanites, wanting admittance to Edina’s rolling hills of forested land and farms, wanting a better place to raise children, a better life, near the city but not in it, with all the amenities of city life and all the luxuries money could buy.”

Background material and photographs for this article came from the archival collection of the Edina Historical Society and the following publications: “The History of Edina, Minnesota” by Paul D. Hesterman; “History and Architecture of Edina, Minnesota” by William W. Scott and Jeffrey A. Hess; the Minneapolis Star-Tribune; the Country Club Directory; and the Country Club Association Newsletter.



A Thorpe Bros. promotional brochure for the Country Club District painted a very romantic picture of life along Minnehaha Creek.

Edina Historical Society

Curbside Recycling Begins In Edina

Beginning this month, Edina residents will be required to take their recyclables to the curb. Garbage will continue to be collected at the garage.

To reduce residents’ costs and encourage more recycling, the Edina City Council voted for curbside recycling collection in 2001. Until recently, BFI had collected Edina residents’ recycling at the garage for a higher rate than curbside. Although City ordinance previously required residents to leave their recycling at the garage for pick up, staff said that nearly 60 percent put their bins at the curb. For that reason and the lower rate offered for curbside collection, the Council agreed to switch to curbside pickup and amend its ordinance.

Beginning Jan. 1, residents will be required to place their bins at the curb on collection day. The monthly rate will be less than \$2.10 for single family residences and duplexes and \$1.90 per unit for multi-unit complexes such as apartment buildings. The current rates are \$2.70 and \$2.30 per month, respectively.

“We are hoping that curbside collection will improve our already outstanding participation in the recycling program,” said Recycling Coordinator Solvei Wilmot. “Bins at the curb will be a visible reminder of the importance of recycling.

“We are also hoping to alleviate any missed recycling pickups with curbside recycling. I think we’ll also see less ‘spillage’ of materials from door to street.”



Edina resident Josh Arnold takes his recycling bin to the curb on collection day. Beginning Jan. 1, all residents must take their bins to the curb. BFI will no longer collect recyclables at the garage or side door.

BFI will continue to provide garage side collection for people who are unable to take their bins to the curb, such as those who are elderly or disabled.

Nine items are collectible in Edina’s residential recycling program:

- Newspapers
- Magazines and catalogs
- Mixed paper (junk mail)
- Plastic bottles with necks
- Cans
- Glass
- Telephone books
- Boxboard: cracker, cake and cookie type boxes. Do not include boxboard products from the refrigerator or freezer, as they are coated with a moisture barrier.
- Cardboard: flattened, bagged or bundled and no larger than 3’ x 3’ x 1’.

All items should be placed in a paper grocery bag and set out in the recycling bin by 7 a.m. on the day of collection. Recycling and garbage containers should be stored out of view from the front street after collection.

For more information or to arrange garage-side pickup, contact Recycling Coordinator Solvei Wilmot, 952-826-0463.

Our Employees Are Even Bubblier.

Keeping our stores well stocked is one commitment and ensuring customer satisfaction is another. At Edina Liquor, you will find knowledgeable, friendly staff available to meet your every request; whether it is carrying purchases to your car or helping you select the perfect bottle of wine. Whenever you shop one of our three convenient locations, the proceeds go right back into your community, keeping your taxes low.

We look forward to serving you in the new millennium.

EDINA LIQUOR

Happy Holidays from the staff of Edina Liquor Stores. Please don't drink and drive.

Edina's Municipal Liquor Stores
Grand View (near Jerry's Foods) • Southdale (next to Cub) • 50th & France (next to Lunds)

Edina's Public Works, Park Maintenance Staffs Plow Through Another Winter

The City of Edina's Public Works and Park Maintenance staffs are knee-deep in a winter ritual - snowplowing.

Each department concentrates on snow removal when more than 1½ inches of flakes fall to the ground. The Public Works staff plows approximately 220 miles of street, 25 miles of sidewalks, three parking ramps and lots in Edina. Park Maintenance staff remove snow from 20 parking lots and 8 miles of park trails. Snow is also removed from 15 pumphouses and 23 liftstations. It can take as long as 12 hours to complete the job. Equipment includes two graders, five loaders, 20 dump trucks with plows and wings, and two sidewalk machines.

After a snowfall, staff usually begin their workday earlier than usual – 4 a.m. – in order to have the City's "red routes" plowed before rush hour. Red routes are major City streets such as 50th, 70th and Wooddale. Sidewalks around schools also get first priority.

Edina has a reputation for providing excellent snow plowing. Staff say there are several reasons why people think highly of the work they do. Public Works employees plow from curb to curb and around corners, creating no windrows along the 26 routes they clear. Edina crews with sufficient back-up manpower go to work before many other cities. Here, just 1½-2 inches is considered a significant "event" and requires an all-out effort. Residents help to make snow plowing and removal more efficient by parking off City streets, clearing fire hydrants and keeping snow on their property. "An all-department effort is what makes it work," said Steve

Johnson, Public Works Coordinator. "Even though their regular work is still here and has to get done, our guys take a lot of pride in their plowing and snow removal."



To allow City crews to do their jobs properly, obey the following winter regulations:

- Do not park any vehicle on a City street, highway or alley when 1½ inches or more of snow has fallen, until it has been plowed to the curb line.
- Do not park any vehicle on a City street, highway or alley for more than six hours unless traffic signs specifically allow you to do so or if you are engaged in a certain job-related activity as described in the City Code.
- Do not park on a City street, highway or alley from 1 a.m. to 6 a.m. from Nov. 1 to March 30.
- Clear snow from around fire hydrants on your property as soon as the snow stops falling.
- Remember that snow removed from driveways, walkways or sidewalks, whether removed by you or a private snow removal company, must remain on your property. Snow may not be pushed across the roadway. Do not shovel snow into the street or dump it on someone else's property.

For more information on snowplowing in Edina, contact the Public Works Department, 952-826-0376.

It's Not Only Neighborly ... It's the Law

Winter is the time of year when many people start thinking about how they can improve their property once the snow melts and temperatures climb. Keep the following in mind as you plan those spring projects.

Building a new deck

- Plans need to be approved by the Building Inspections Department and a building permit obtained before construction may begin.
- Decks must maintain specific setback requirements.
- Wooden decks must be constructed of treated or decay-resistant wood.
- The deck must hold a minimum of 60 pounds of weight per square foot. A guardrail is required for all decks 30 or more inches above ground and a handrail is required if four or more steps are attached.

Building a storage shed

- Accessory structures such as garden buildings, utility sheds or other outbuildings might require a building permit, depending on the size of the structure.
- A shed does not require a permit if it is no larger than 120 square feet in area. Larger structures require a permit and must meet specific placement requirements.

Fencing your yard

- Fences must be placed on or inside your lot lines.

- The finished side of a fence must face out toward neighboring properties.
- Fences may not exceed four feet in height in the front yard area.
- Fences may not exceed eight feet in height in the side or rear yard. Fences exceeding six feet in height require a building permit.
- Fences may not obstruct clear view at intersections.

Adding or changing a driveway

- Permits might be required for improvements to a driveway and are required for new driveways and curb cuts. The Engineering Department reviews driveway improvements and all curb cut changes.

For more information about obtaining a building permit or for answers to questions relating to construction, contact the Building Inspections Department, 952-826-0372.

For more information about structure setback, height and zoning matters, contact the Planning Department, 952-826-0369.

For more information about driveway or curb cut changes, contact the Engineering Department, 952-826-0371.



Hot Happenings in Park and Recreation

Indoor Skating Lessons

Registration for the spring session of skating lessons at Braemar Arena will be held 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. Jan. 16. Phone-in registrations will not be accepted. A schedule of lesson programs is available at the Arena or City website, www.ci.edina.mn.us, or by calling 952-941-1322. Open skating schedules are also available.

Indoor Edinborough Park also offers indoor skating lessons for toddlers ages 3 to 6 and older youth on its intimate, family-style rink. Lessons help children learn basic movements using special games and toys. Classes are available for a variety of levels, from toddlers learning to stand on skates to youth ready to start jumping. Winter classes begin Jan. 2, Feb. 13 and March 27. For more information or to register, call 952-832-6790.

Outdoor Skating

The City offers 12 outdoor ice skating rinks. The rinks opened for the season in December. Hours on school days are 3:45 to 9:30 p.m., 9 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. Saturdays, 1 to 9:30 p.m. Sundays, and noon to 9:30 p.m. non-school days. Winter holiday hours are noon to 9:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, noon to 9:30 p.m. New Year's Day.

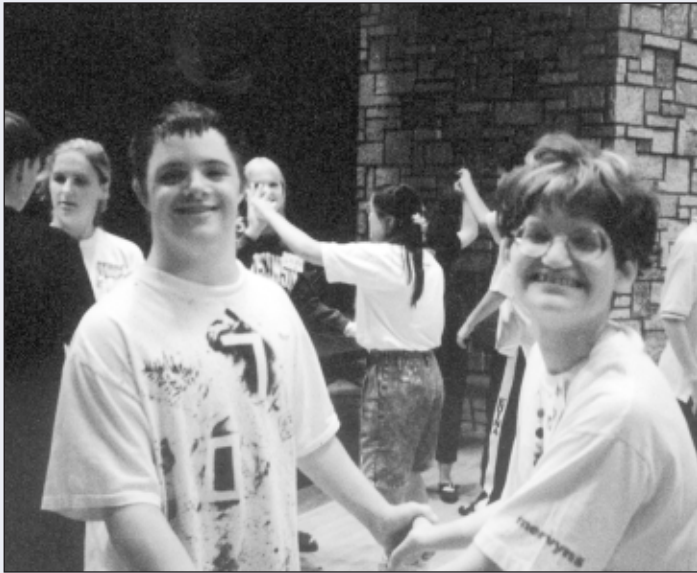
Going to the Prom

In "Going to the Prom," an Adaptive Recreation program, participants will learn all aspects of going to the prom. Teenagers will practice getting ready for the prom and discuss how to ask someone on a date, how to ask someone to dance and what to say when they say "yes." The program will be held 10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Friday, March 30 and

Monday, April 2, at Arneson Acres Park, 4711 W. 70th St. Cost is \$15 per person. For more information or to register, call 952-826-0433/952-826-0379 TDD.

Peer Volunteer Program

The Adaptive Recreation and Learning Exchange Peer Volunteer Program is in place to give members of the community an opportunity to assist youth, teens and adults who have disabilities in a recreation setting. Individual and group volunteers are wanted. Call 952-826-0433/952-826-0379 TDD for more information on this opportunity to give back to the community.



Adaptive Recreation "Going to the Prom"

Braemar Golf Course Receives MGA 'Member Club of the Year' Award

Braemar Golf Course late last year was presented the Minnesota Golf Association's inaugural "Member Club of the Year Award."



The award was presented Saturday, Nov. 11, at the MGA's annual meeting, held at Rush Creek Golf Club in Maple Grove. According to MGA staff, Braemar was selected for the award out of 25 nominees because of its tremendous support of Associate memberships and member club programs, involvement with the MGA junior program and accountability. Nearly 500 clubs were eligible to apply for the award.

"We are very pleased to receive the MGA Member Club of the Year Award for an 18-hole course," said Braemar Manager John Valliere. "We strive to support the MGA year-round. The Braemar mentors teach junior participants etiquette, rules and the civility of the game. Braemar makes its dome available in the winter so Associates can prepare for spring play. Braemar has tried to be very generous over the years in hosting MGA events whenever asked."

Nominated for the award by Braemar GHIN Manager John Hoyt, the local course sponsors approximately 1,510 active Associate memberships and support 17 independent clubs, including two junior clubs, two clubs whose members are "members-at-large," and 13 leagues. The golf course has sponsored boys and girls MGA junior teams for about 35 years. In addition, Braemar has been an active participant in hosting MGA tournaments and qualifiers since the late 1960s, including the 1970 Women's State Amateur, 1974 Minnesota Women's Public Golf Association, 1975 Senior Amateur, 1979 national MGA/USGA Women's Public Links, and 1989 Metro Seniors championships.

Besides a plaque Braemar received at the luncheon, the MGA will donate \$500 to a charity of the course's choice. Other awards presented at the MGA annual meeting included Players of the Year, Distinguished Service Award and Evans Scholar of the Year.

For more information about the award or any of the local course's offerings, contact Braemar Golf Course, 952-826-6799.



Terry Stevens Targets Youth Leadership With Program

Edina Rotarian Terry Stevens is targeting youth leadership in the community.

As part of his volunteer duties as a member of a local Rotary club, several years ago Stevens attended a one-day seminar with Edina High School students. He was so moved by the presentation on leadership that he wanted to make sure there was a follow-up program for the teenagers. With the help of Edina Chemical Health Partners, "Target Leadership" began.

The purpose of Target Leadership is to develop projects for blossoming student leaders to do within the schools. The program, which began during the 1996-97 school year, is open to any high school student who wants to participate. The Edina Rotary clubs and Edina Chemical Health Partners sponsor Target Leadership.

"I like working with kids that age and saw value in offering a program where the only requirement was a willingness to

participate," Stevens said. "Leadership skills will help them in whatever they choose to do in life. I believe leadership skills also help improve self-esteem."

Edina Chemical Health Coordinator Kathy Iverson applauds Stevens' work. "He is totally committed to developing young people into leaders of today and tomorrow. He is a team player and very humble," she said. "I have found his ability to keep one foot going in front of the other truly inspirational. I have learned so much from him, and I know young people in our community have also. His service to Edina has been exceptional."

Stevens meets with the students once a month. About 50 students attend each meeting. Similar to a board of directors, a core group of approximately 12 students does most of the project planning.

The first major project of Target Leadership was "Adopt-A-Hallway." Individuals and groups of



Rotarian Terry Stevens helped develop "Target Leadership," a program to promote leadership skills among high school students. Stevens meets with a group of approximately 50 students once a month to plan projects.

Photo by Brad Fox, FastFoto

students and faculty took responsibility for clearing litter from the Commons area of the high school and from the tops of lockers in each hallway of the high school.

Another successful program, which gathered much media attention last spring, is "Chalk It Up." Just before prom, students use chalk to write messages outside Edina High School about the affects of drinking and driving. Last year, the students even brought in a demolished car that was involved in an alcohol-related accident to show the dramatic affects.

As part of "Big Brother, Big Sister," ninth-grade middle school students from Valley View and South View middle schools come to the high school for one morning to get acquainted with upperclassmen, classes and the building. Many believe the program helps ease the transition from middle to high school.

Stevens said the goal of Target Leadership is to complete seven or eight projects per school year. Besides Adopt-A-Hallway, Chalk It Up and Big Brother, Big Sister, this year's group is looking to establish a recreational area somewhere in the school and set up picnic tables outside for lunch. Principal Chace Anderson and other school administrators must approve all projects.


Of course, through each project, the students learn how to be leaders. Stevens said the only role adults play in the projects is that of mentors. "Giving kids a chance to look at how different adults operate is

really important. Our job is to teach the students how to be leaders," he said. "It's very rewarding to see a student sit on the sidelines for meeting after meeting just listening, and then all of a sudden, after months of silence, take a stand or get really involved."


"One of the treats of the whole program is watching kids blossom into tomorrow's leaders."

For more information about Target Leadership, contact Edina Chemical Health Coordinator Kathy Iverson, 952-929-7627.

Home Rehab Funds for Qualified Edina Home Owners



You may qualify for up to \$15,000 to make repairs or necessary improvements to your Edina home through the **Hennepin County Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program**. This program provides deferred repayment funds on a first-come-first-served basis to people who can show financial need. If you would like to receive information, income guidelines, qualification summaries, interest rates, and applications, please call Associate Planner Joyce Repya at the Edina Planning Department, 826-0462. Dozens of Edina residents have protected the value of their homes by using this program. If your primary residence is located in Edina and needs repair or structural improvements, please give Joyce a call.



**CITY OF EDINA
PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

Edina Residents, Business People 'Connect With Kids'

Edina residents, business people and organizations are “Connecting With Kids.”

Late last year, the Edina City Council, Board of Education and Chamber of Commerce Executive Board approved a resolution supporting an initiative to create a more supportive school and community environment. The document reads, in part:

“WHEREAS, children and adolescents deserve to grow up safe, healthy, loved, secure and educated; and

WHEREAS, families, schools and the community need to work together to meet the needs of children and adolescents; and

WHEREAS, we recognize the interdependence of government, schools, the business community, social service agencies, the medical community, the faith community, civic organizations and neighborhoods and thus believe the best way to ensure our children’s future is to work together; and ...

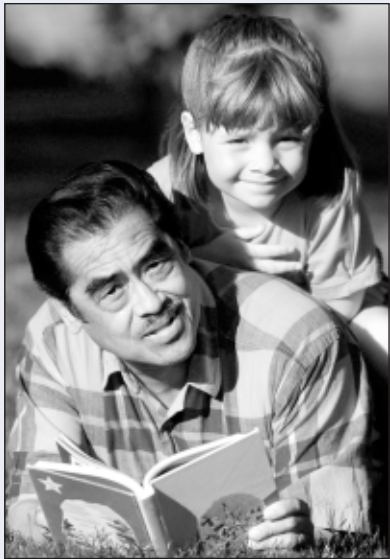
WHEREAS, Connecting With Kids focuses on developing a community-wide commitment to surround children and adolescents with the wide range of “assets” crucial for healthy development,

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that the [City of Edina] endorses the effort and will support the efforts of the community in Connecting With Kids.”

Many other groups and organizations are also signing the resolution in support of Connecting With Kids. As a result of the grassroots initiative, many have also begun reaching out in new ways to youth in the community.

City Clerk Debra Mangen trained a number of Edina High School students to serve as election judges. Mangen, Voter Registration Clerk Jane Timm and other election judges worked closely with the students on Election Day. While getting paid, the students were taught more about and contributed to the election process.

The Edina Chamber of Commerce, through its Education Committee, began inviting students to its monthly general membership meetings. The students are seated with the featured speaker, introduced and exposed to a business luncheon.



“Families, schools and the community need to work together to meet the needs of children”.

Edina High School Principal Chace Anderson worked with a group of students to paint a mural in the building’s science wing. Anderson set a budget for the students, who were allowed to design their own artwork and buy materials within those constraints.

“The good news is that everyone – parents, grandparents, educators, neighbors, children, teenagers, youth workers, employers, health care providers, coaches and others – can

reach out to kids,” said Carl Holmstrom, director of the initiative’s steering committee. “Everyone has a role to play.”

Do you know of someone who reaches out to kids and serves as an example for Connecting With Kids? For more information or to share a story, contact Communications Coordinator Jennifer Wilkinson, 952-832-6063. To arrange a speaker on the topic, contact Christine Weymouth or Doug Johnson, Edina Public Schools, 952-928-2500.



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*Star Tribune Special Report, May 9 - 11, 1999



Edina Historical Society Looks Back On '50 Years Of Edina Athletics'

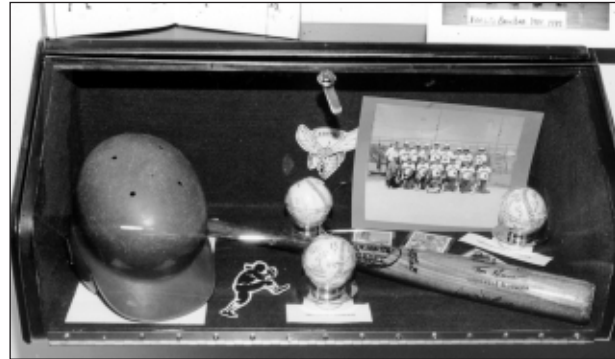
Hundreds of teenage faces captured on film smile back from under glass. The sounds of a championship basketball game played more than 30 years ago are heard again. Green wrestling singlets, cheerleading skirts, gymnastics leotards and baseball uniforms hung in closets years ago are again getting cheers from fans of Edina athletics.

They were the center of attention years ago on the basketball court, hockey arena, golf course and other sports venues. Hundreds of similar artifacts are on display at the Edina Historical Museum, 4711 W. 70th St. The Historical Society opened the special exhibit, "50 Years of Edina Athletics" in early October. The display will be open through May.

"I am so glad we could put this exhibit together for the community," said Kathleen Wetherall, Executive Director of the Historical Society. "The museum offers a cozy atmosphere for people to take their time reliving their memories of Edina athletics."

Trophies, uniforms, equipment and photos from Edina-Morningside, Edina West, Edina East, and Edina high schools are on display. Favorite pieces include a video of one of Coach Duane Baglien's three consecutive state basketball championships in the 1960s, a Cougar mascot head and a green beanie and letter sweater.

From 1950 to the spring of 2000, Edina won 100 state championships – the most of any school in the state. Of those, 59 were won by boys, 41 by girls,



Baseball memorabilia is among the many things on display as part of "50 Years of Edina Athletics" at the Edina Historical Museum.



A man looks through a case where the first state championship trophy, won by Edina-Morningside High School in 1954, is on display next to Edina's 100th state championship trophy, won last spring by the boys tennis team.

according to school records. Championships have been won in football, boys gymnastics, girls tennis, girls swimming, girls soccer, boys soccer, boys basketball, girls gymnastics, boys hockey, Nordic boys skiing, Alpine boys skiing, boys swimming, girls basketball, Alpine girls skiing, baseball, boys golf, boys tennis, boys track and girls golf. The greatest number of championships occurred during the 1987-88 school year when seven were won.

Edina's first state championship trophy, won by the boys golf team at Morningside High School in 1954, and 100th trophy, won by the Edina High School boys tennis team in the spring of 2000, are placed next to each other in the exhibit.

"We had been planning the exhibit more than a year in advance," said Wetherall. "Winning the 100th state championship the year of the exhibit was just lucky – it added another element to our plans. I am glad we are able to celebrate the 100 wins through the exhibit."

Wetherall said the exhibit "hits home" for more people than a typical historical exhibit. "People are having so much fun finding things from when they or their children were in school," she said. "I have heard many, many stories over the course of this exhibit. Anyone who has gone to Edina High School should come see the exhibit. They won't be disappointed."

The Museum is open 9 a.m. to noon Thursdays, 10 a.m. to noon Saturdays and by appointment.

For more information about the exhibit or to arrange a tour, call the Edina Historical Society, 952-928-4577. The Society will happily accept donations of high school athletic memorabilia or will include the items in the exhibit.



Edina resident and former Park and Recreation Director Bob Kojetin looks over a hockey trophy and artifacts. The goalie mask, skates and No. 30 jersey were worn by Larry Thayer, Braemar Arena Manager, in the 1969 state high school hockey championship game.

New City Council Members To Take Oath Of Office

Dennis Maetzold, Scot Housh, Michael Kelly and Linda Masica will take the oath of office at the Edina City Council’s first meeting of the year, to be held Jan. 2.

In an uncontested race for Mayor, Dennis Maetzold, who was appointed mayor in the summer of 1999, earned another term during the Nov. 7 General Election. According to election results, he received 22,467 votes.

In the race for two, four-year positions on the Council, Michael Kelly and Linda Masica came out on top. Incumbent Kelly received 11,893 votes. Masica received 11,584. Vote totals for the other candidates were Incumbent Nan Krieger Faust, 9,324, and Ron Elmquist, 6,951.

Scot Housh won a two-year position on the Council, succeeding Scott Johnson who did not seek election. Housh received 10,315 votes. Other vote totals in the election were Lee McGrath, 5,241; Ardis Louise Wexler, 5,117; and Brien A. Martin, 2,350.

The City of Edina had a high voter turnout. City Clerk Debra Mangen said 30,483 residents voted during the election, more than 80 percent of the community’s registered voters. More than 33,500 people registered to vote in advance of the election; 4,316 registered at the polls.

The results of the local election with a breakdown by precinct are available on the City’s website, www.ci.edina.mn.us. For more information about the election, contact City Clerk Debra Mangen, 952-826-0408.



The City of Edina saw a high voter turnout during the 2000 General Election. People had to wait in long lines at most of the City’s 20 polling places.

Precinct	Voter Totals	Precinct	Voter Totals
Precinct 1A	1,670	Precinct 10	1,500
Precinct 1B	1,802	Precinct 11	1,792
Precinct 2	1,413	Precinct 12	1,534
Precinct 3	1,875	Precinct 13	1,299
Precinct 4	1,547	Precinct 14	1,679
Precinct 5	1,880	Precinct 15	1,761
Precinct 6	1,641	Precinct 16	1,666
Precinct 7	989	Precinct 17	937
Precinct 8	1,546	Precinct 18	1,561
Precinct 9	1,596	Precinct 19	795

‘Black-And-Whites’ Draw Much Attention To Police Department

Like the squad cars Mayberry Sheriff Andy Taylor and Officer Barney Fife drove in the popular sitcom, “The Andy Griffith Show,” Edina police officers are now patrolling the streets in black-and-white squad cars.

In the fall of 2000, the Edina Police Department purchased four Ford Crown Victoria Police Interceptors to replace older cars with high mileage. The cars were painted black and white and emblazoned with traditional graphics.

“The trend in squad cars is a return to the traditional black and white,” said Police Chief Mike Siitari. “It’s almost becoming the norm.” Some of the other metropolitan police departments now driving the black-and-whites are Eden Prairie, Hopkins, Minnetonka and Plymouth.

Siitari said the request for the black-and-whites came from patrol officers in 1999. “Part of the reason why I approved these cars was because they were what our officers wanted,” he said. “Patrol cars are their office – it’s where they work.”

But the black-and-whites haven’t just made the officers happy. Many residents have commented on the new cars and offered their compliments. “We are receiving uniform praise for the cars – officers like them and the public like them,” Siitari said, smiling. “Patrol cars are the most visible part of our department, and the black-and-whites are easier to identify. More and more residents are contacting the officers to talk about the cars. There is a difference.”



Edina Police Chief Mike Siitari shows off one of four black-and-white Ford Crown Victoria Police Interceptors purchased last fall. The cars, he said, have made a difference aesthetically and in community-oriented policing efforts.

The Edina Police Department has a fleet of 11 marked squad cars. Siitari said that within two or three years, depending on mileage, the entire fleet should be made up of the modern black-and-whites.

For more information, contact the Edina Police Department, 952-826-1610.

City Of Edina Begins Reappraisal Project

Late last year, to equalize property values, the City of Edina Assessing Department, with help from Vanguard Appraisal Inc., began door-to-door inspections of all single family residential properties in the community.

State law requires each county and city to complete quartile reviews. In other words, 25 percent of the jurisdiction each year is required to be inspected and reviewed. That information is then used to value the jurisdiction. Each taxpayer is then responsible for paying only his or her fair share of the property tax burden.

“Periodic inspections and reappraisals of properties are necessary because all properties do not increase or decrease in value at the same rate,” said City Assessor Rick Petersburg. “Some properties physically deteriorate faster than others, economic conditions might impact areas of the City differently, and in some instances similar buildings located in different areas of the City will differ greatly in value due to economic factors.”

Because of the City of Edina’s limited staff, the Edina City Council in July 2000 approved the hiring of Vanguard Appraisal to assist with the reappraisal project. Data collectors will make interior and exterior inspections of all single family residential properties. Information to be collected includes type of construction, type of interior finish, physical condition of the property, age of structures and exterior measurements. A complete sale analysis,

local construction costs and economic conditions will also be considered. No estimate of value will be given at the time of the inspection.

“The data collectors will be compiling information to be used to estimate fair market values of each property. The information collected is only pertinent to real property – not personal property,” Petersburg pointed out.



Data collectors will make interior and exterior inspections of all single family residential properties.

In order for the inspection process to run smoothly, the data collectors will vary their working hours in an attempt to find owners at home. The data collectors, who will have photo identification cards signed by City Manager Gordon Hughes, will make the initial contact to complete an interior and exterior inspection of the home. If the owner is not home, the data collector will complete the exterior inspection and verify the measurements of the home. Before leaving the property, the data collector will leave a tag at the home asking the owner to call the Assessor’s office within five days to schedule an appointment for an interior inspection of the property.

Property owners are asked to cooperate by allowing a complete inspection of their property and providing accurate information in order for a fair and equitable assessment of each property. Denial of access to the property or providing inaccurate information does not release the company representatives from estimating data not provided. In such a case, the representative will provide his or her best estimate of data and the Assessor’s office will place an estimated value on the property. State law provides that property owners may not appeal the values of property to which access is denied.

Preliminary data collection began in the northeast area of Edina in early November. The entire project is scheduled for completion in September of 2001. Notice of final value estimates will be mailed to each property owner after February 2002. After receiving

the notice, property owners will have an opportunity to meet informally to discuss their revaluation. The new assessments will be effective for the January 2, 2002 assessment, taxes payable in 2003.

For more information about the reappraisal project, contact the Assessor’s office, 952-826-0365.

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City Website Grows And Attracts More Visitors

Since last year, the number of monthly visitors to the City of Edina’s website, www.ci.edina.mn.us, has nearly quadrupled. Building on the City’s commitment to provide residents with current and accurate information about Edina, the website features 24-hour per day access to information that was formerly available only by phone, mail or a visit to City offices.

The City uses a software program to track what is going on in the website. By using the software, City officials learned that in December of 1999, there were a total of 8,309 successful hits to the site. By August 2000, the site was attracting approximately 40,000 visitors each month.

Currently, the website gets more than 1,250 hits per day, with the most popular days of the week being Monday, Thursday and Friday. The vast majority log on during business hours, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., entering through the home page. Top destinations after the home page are Job Listings; Facilities, with links to Braemar Arena, Braemar Golf Course, Centennial Lakes Park, Edina Aquatic Center, Edina Liquor, Edina Senior Center and Edinborough Park; City Services; Community Links and the search engine.

In the past year, much has been added to the website, including the complete City Code, City job application, information on the Edina Fire Department, Braemar Arena, Braemar Golf Course and Edina Liquor, weekly press releases, and *About Town*. The website also features a number of documents and applications that

can be downloaded and printed from home, including agendas, applications and crime reports.

- Among the things you can do using the City’s website are:**
- Download a copy of the Edina City Council agenda prior to meetings.
 - Complete research using the City Code.
 - Download, print and fill out building permit applications from home.
 - Read press releases under “What’s New” before they are printed in the media.
 - Plan your monthly activities using the City Calendar.



www.ci.edina.mn.us

- Learn where the most recent fires and commercial crimes occurred in the City.
- Link to other community organizations’ websites.

“The City’s goal is to make the website as user-friendly as possible,” said Communications Coordinator Jennifer Wilkinson. “Ultimately, we would like to have most forms and information available to residents online – anything you would call City Hall for should also be available on the website.”

Future website expansion includes adding more complete information about the Engineering, Finance, Health, Planning and Public Works Departments; the 2001 Park and Recreation Activities Directory; and agendas of boards, commissions and committees.

For the website to continue to evolve, the City needs feedback from residents – especially comments on what additional information is needed online to increase the website’s efficiency and meet the needs of the Edina community. Questions and comments can be directed to Wilkinson, 952-832-6063, or via e-mail, EdinaMail@ci.edina.mn.us. Log on today!



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Opus, Ron Clark Construction Break Ground For ‘Grandview Square’

Opus Northwest and Ron Clark Construction late last year broke ground for a multi-use redevelopment dubbed “Grandview Square.”

The former municipally owned “Kunz-Lewis” site and other properties south of Eden Avenue will be redeveloped as part of the project. The \$75 million project includes the construction of a three-story, 93,000-square-foot office building; a two-story, 36,000-square-foot library and senior

center; and a four-story, 171-unit condominium complex. The development has been designed to have an “Old World” feel with a central “town square,” which will be a City park. Walking paths and sidewalks will connect the various facilities.

The structure on the Kunz-Lewis property and the building that formerly housed Thompson Academy of Gymnastics (TAGS) were demolished in September after a formal

groundbreaking ceremony Sept. 13. Before the end of the year, construction began on the office building, the first phase of housing and the town square.

The office building and senior center/library complex should be finished before 2002, according to plans submitted to the Planning Department and approved by the City Council in August. The first phase of housing, which will include at least 40 units, will also be done that year. The remaining three phases should be finished by 2005.

When the new building is complete, the Edina Senior Center will move from the third floor of the Edina Community Center. The Edina Community Library, currently located next to City Hall at 4701 W. 50th St., will also move into the new facility. It is the City’s intention to move the Edina Police Department into the vacated library space once that move is made.

Opus will construct all elements of the project except for the condominiums. Opus will own the office building and lease the units. Ron Clark will design, construct and sell the condominiums. The City and Hennepin County will jointly own and maintain the senior center/library complex.

“We are pleased to see this redevelopment project begin in the Grandview area,” said Mayor Dennis Maetzold, pointing out that completing such a project was a goal established during the “Vision 20/20” strategic planning process. “Grandview Square is sure to enhance northwest Edina.”

For more information on the project, contact the Planning Department, 952-826-0369. For more information about the housing or to be placed on a list for the condominiums, contact Ron Clark Construction, 952-947-3000.



Artist's rendering of “Grandview Square”



More than a dozen people participated Sept. 13 in a formal groundbreaking ceremony for “Grandview Square,” a redevelopment south of Eden Avenue and west of Minnesota Highway 100. Among those who attended the groundbreaking were representatives of Opus Northwest, Ron Clark Construction and the City.



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Edina Crime Prevention Fund Kicks Off Annual Campaign

During daylight hours 30 years ago, burglars broke into an Edina home and viciously beat the resident. The victim died a few days later from complications associated with the beating. Even after extensive work, Edina Police Department officers were unable to develop adequate information to solve the case. No funds were available to post as a reward for valuable information related to the case or to pay informants.

For more than a year, community leaders worked to establish a private fund for the purpose of offering rewards and assisting the Police Department with crime prevention, so similar crimes would not go unsolved. When established, it was designated “The Edina Crime Prevention Fund.” In the spring of 1970, other civic organizations were approached for their financial support as sponsors and a request for donations was sent to all Edina residents. Today, hundreds of crimes have been solved in Edina in part because of money collected and distributed by the Fund.

“The Edina Crime Prevention Fund is able to do so much for the Police Department that the City budget doesn’t allow for,” said Don Peterson, Fund Coordinator. “Just as our name implies, the Fund is about crime prevention and setting up rewards for assisting our officers in the local battle against crime.”

Police Chief Mike Siitari echoed his comments. “The Police Department has recovered a lot of property, arrested many criminals and uncovered a lot of information that we would not have been able to without the Crime Prevention Fund,”

he said. “With the help of concerned citizens, the Edina Crime Prevention Fund has become a national model of an effective weapon in the fight against crime.”

In 2000, the Fund offered a number of rewards; purchased educational coloring and activities books for children, a projector for the Police Department, reward signs for placement in City parks and trading cards for various officers; and helped fund the DARE program and the Crime Prevention Specialist position within the Police Department. In addition, the Fund assisted Tri-City Health Partners with purchasing an anti-drug advertisement.



The Edina Crime Prevention Fund is administered by a board of directors. The 2000 board of directors included front: Dennis Maetzold, Chuck Yeschke, Harold Westerberg and Nicholas O’Hara; back: Crime Prevention Specialist Molly Anderson, Jim Van Valkenburg, Police Chief Mike Siitari and Don Peterson. Not pictured are Bob Sherman, Roger Manthe and Bert Merfeld.

Peterson said the Fund will enable similar activities and programs in 2001. The Fund, administered by a board of directors elected annually by the sponsoring community organizations, is in the middle of its annual fund-raising campaign. Sponsoring organizations are Athena Women’s Club, Edina Chamber of Commerce, Edina Federated Women’s Club, Edina Kiwanis Golden “K” Club, League of Women Voters – Edina, Edina Lions Club, Edina Optimists Club, Edina Rotary Club, Edina Women’s Club, Morningside Women’s Club and Southdale Y’s Men’s Club. Donations are also being sought from residents and business people.

“The Edina Crime Prevention Fund goes a long way in assisting local officers. However, we’re not an island and the things that affect the greater metropolitan area affect us too,” said Peterson, pointing out that several of the Fund’s 2000 rewards are still outstanding. They include:

- Up to \$3,000 for information leading to the apprehension, arrest and conviction of the person or people responsible for extensive damage done to 10 City of Edina vehicles at the former “Kunz-Lewis site” between the evening of July 3 and 7 a.m., July 5, 2000.
- Up to \$1,000 for information leading to the apprehension, arrest and conviction of the person or people responsible for arson activity in April 2000 at Normandale and Weber parks.
- Up to \$1,000 for information leading to the apprehension, arrest and conviction of the person or



people responsible for making bomb threats to Edina High School and Valley View Middle School on Feb. 15, 2000.

If you have information about one of the crimes listed above or would like more information about the Edina Crime Prevention Fund, contact the Edina Police Department, 952-826-1610. For your convenience, an envelope addressed to the Edina Crime Prevention Fund has been included with this issue of About Town. Please consider making a tax-deductible donation to this valuable cause.

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Jeff Elasky Introduced As New Police-School Liaison Officer

Before the bell rings sounding the start of the school day, a dark-haired man wanders the halls of Edina High School, asking students how their day is going, congratulating athletes on their most recent win and smiling at those he passes. During lunch periods, students often stop by his office to say “hi” and talk.

Although the students have a similar relationship with the man as they do with their teachers, it is different. And the students have a different relationship with Police-School Liaison Officer Jeff Elasky than they do with many other members of the Edina Police Department.

An Edina patrol officer for six years, Elasky was named Police-School Liaison Officer at the beginning of the 2000-2001 school year. He is the third Police-School Liaison Officer since the local program began seven years ago. Elasky’s first experience working with students came the previous school year when he was named a DARE Officer and worked with middle schoolers. “After working with the

sixth-graders through the DARE program, I knew I had something to offer kids,” Elasky said. “We all made mistakes growing up. I made mistakes when I was younger and am willing to share those stories and the message of facing consequences. I think I can relate well to the students.”

Although Elasky has an office at Edina High School, he serves all of the schools in Edina. Among his many responsibilities are investigating crimes that happen

in schools such as thefts from lockers or backpacks, fielding calls from parents concerned about their child’s behavior, providing security at athletic events and dances, speaking to classes and teaching the DARE program.

Proving that no two working days are the same, Elasky began a recent morning meeting with students in the high school library about an issue of concern to the teenagers. He was then called to one of the middle schools to

investigate a bicycle vandalism. Later in the day, he taught DARE. He did all of those things while still finding time to chat with students, talk to parents and write police reports.

“What’s most important is getting to know the kids,” Elasky said. “I don’t want the kids to only come to me when there is a problem. I don’t want to just be the enforcer, the hammer. I want to be a resource person for the schools.

“Working as a school liaison officer is a lot different than working the street where you are always answering a call. This job allows me to be more proactive, prevent crime and prevent teenagers from getting into bad situations.”

Police Chief Mike Siitari agreed. “Jeff is a valuable resource for students, parents and school personnel in situations where a law enforcement perspective can help solve a problem situation,” he said. “In a student population of several thousand teens, there are going to be kids who exhibit at-risk behavior. Having a police officer in the school allows a timely response to address potential problems and take enforcement action when necessary.”

One of the many ways Elasky helps make himself more approachable is by wearing casual clothing most days instead of his uniform. “Some teenagers have a perception that the police pick on juveniles,” the officer said. “It’s my job to make sure they know that when they have negative encounters with police officers, it’s because they put themselves in a bad situation. It’s not because the police made them speed, stay out after curfew or drink a beer at a party. Police officers want to work with kids, not pick on them.”

Because of the success of the program, the Police Department is considering adding an additional Police-School Liaison Officer. Such a move would allow the officers more time to get to know students and prevent crime.



Police-School Liaison Officer Jeff Elasky, center, talks with a group of students one morning before classes start at Edina High School. Besides serving as a mentor to children, Elasky is responsible for investigating and preventing crime within all Edina schools, speaking with classes and talking with concerned parents.

Photo by Brad Fox, FastFoto



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